

Spotlight On

Air Force Staff Sgt. Michael J. Schwartz II
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Colorado Springs, Colo. native, Air Force Staff Sgt. Michael J. Schwartz II is a digital imaging graphics specialist. He prepares slides, graphics, displays, briefings and training aides in support of North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and U.S. Northern Command. He reported for duty March 17th of this year.

"My job supports homeland defense by providing visuals/graphics for mission critical briefings and politically sensitive visits from foreign dignitaries and distinguished visitors," Schwartz said.

"I always strive for seemingly unreachable levels of perfection and creativity. I treat all jobs with the same sense of importance, NEVER sacrificing quality. Customers arrive feeling like their need is my highest priority, and leave satisfied, knowing that they received a product that went above and beyond the mark."

Asked how the public identifies with his job, he said, "My job is very customer service oriented. Each individual's need is handled on a case-by-case basis demanding special attention. The customer identifies with me at the time of submission, during progress and at the time of completion. No one is ever out of the loop, provided all information was correct and received when the request was made. My products are constantly in the eye of the public. The purpose of my work is to effectively deliver critical information to the viewer, and the design principles I use determine a successful outcome. I have the privileged opportunity to leave a personalized, lasting impression on a person and place at a given point in time. Even after the work order is signed and a satisfied customer receives the product, the public can continue to identify with me through my work."

Schwartz joined the Air Force in Sept. 1996. He said he joined the military because "it was a path toward a future for someone who didn't have one. I was seriously in debt, working as an assistant manager at the mall. I wanted to pursue art school, but I couldn't afford it. When I considered joining the military, I knew I wanted to be in the graphics career field, but had to wait 36 months to cross-train from my first job as a jet engine mechanic at Dyess AFB in Texas."

"Finally eligible to cross-train at my 3-year mark, there were no openings in the career field of my choice, but I was steadfast in my quest. I submitted an Exception to Policy package to the Pentagon, complete with portfolio. After almost a year and a half, my package fell into the lap of someone at Randolph AFB who helped me get into the graphics field. I spent two more outstanding years at Dyess AFB, this time doing what I have always wanted to do."

His role model is Nehemiah because he was tasked to rebuild the walls around the city of Jerusalem, which were destroyed by the Babylonians.

"The first thing Nehemiah realized was that before beginning a job, you need to know what you're getting into. Nehemiah would be running into confrontation after confrontation with those who opposed his work. His enemies asked him to come down, that they might counsel with him—they really intended to kill him. Nehemiah



Air Force Staff Sgt. Michael J. Schwartz II
Photo credit: JO1(SW) Bev Allen

said, "I am doing a great work, so I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?" He was blessed for it, and his work was completed in 52 days, record time.

"In my spare time I am a LEGAL graffiti muralist. Like Nehemiah, not a stranger to walls, but our drive and work ethics are similar as well. I admire him for his faith, endurance, his persistence in getting the job done expediently and his pride in his craft. I have applied this logic of excellence and it has resulted in tremendous favor on my career." Schwartz said he will never half-step for the sake of convenience.

"This job is something I am very passionate about. I had to get into this career field the hard way, and I am here to make my presence known through great products and floored customers. I want there to be a definite distinction between something I create, and something created by someone in their office. I am motivated by the idea of a Bionic Product; better, more effective and faster then they ve ever gotten it before. My inspirations include other individuals in this career field, and in the industry that do their job well and really raise the mark."

Schwartz has been stationed in Colorado Springs since March of 2003.

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